

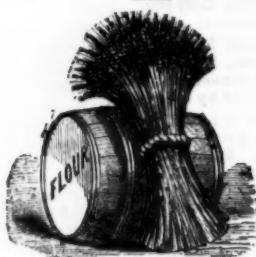


BADGER & MANLEY Publishers & Proprietors.

Vol. XLVII.

Maine Farmer.

Maine Farmer Wheat Prizes.



In appreciation of the efforts which the farmers of our State have made in the growing of wheat in answer to our calls; and as a still further inducement towards the raising of larger yields, the better preparation of the land, and more intensive culture for the wheat crop, the proprietors of the Farmer hereby offer a prize of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS IN CASH, in three premiums, to be paid to the successful competitors in the fall of 1879, upon the following conditions:

1. On the part of the Proprietors of the MAINE FARMER. The money will be placed in the hands of the Treasurer of the State Agricultural Society, the Trustees of which shall appoint a committee who shall have the entire control of the matter, and who shall, as soon as may be after the harvest of 1879 is completed, award the same in premiums of \$50, \$30 and \$20, respectively to those farmers in Maine who shall grow the largest amount of wheat per acre, the second largest, and the third largest.

2. On the part of the competitors. Farmers who intend to compete for this premium shall signify intention to us on or before June 1st, 1879, at which time the list of competitors will be published in our columns. The land on which the crop is grown shall consist of one acre of 400 square yards which shall be measured by a sworn surveyor, or by one of the Selectmen of the town in which the competitor resides. The yield of the crop shall be given in bushels and quarts, and a statement, sworn to before a Justice of the Peace, shall be presented to the Committee after the same is harvested, containing the yield of the acre, the method of preparing the ground, mode of culture, &c. Blanks for this purpose will be provided in due season for all competitors.

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Our Wheat Prizes.

The number of competitors for our wheat is already quite satisfactory, but we hope the list will largely increase before the first day of June when the offer will be closed and the list published. Farmers run no risk in sending in their names.

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The Mineral Theory.

While it is now universally admitted that to restore fertility to a soil that has been exhausted by cultivation and excessive cropping, the substances which have been drawn from it must be returned, it is not so well settled what those substances are and what is the best method of restoring them.

By some, and in fact by most of those who have experimented and written upon the subject, it is claimed that it is the ammoniacal or nitrogenous substances which are taken from the soil by cropping and that these must be returned to the soil, in one way or another, and most of the chemical fertilizers offered in the markets are compounded with this object in view.

On the other hand, it is claimed by some that the soil contains nearly twice as much ammonium as that which is uncultivated, or it is to say, that those who adopt this view claim that it is the mineral substances which should be supplied and more especially those which represent the common sense American farmer."

The Massachusetts agricultural papers that the prospects for a second best sugar factory at Northampton, Mass., are good that three tons of best seed will be telegraphed from Europe to be sown this season. Over 300 acres of beets will be raised in and around Northampton.

The theory that manure spread upon the surface, is lost by leaching was practically set aside, but a report on the sewage of Paris calls for further investigation.

The report says that the sewage water as it comes from the sewers is dark colored, turbid, and of a vile odor.

After being filtered through the cultivated ground it runs out of the undrained clear, cool, without smell or taste, and to chemical tests shows no organic matter.

Those who drink it can not tell it from the most tempering water.

The San Francisco Bulletin gives the result of planting various fruit trees on the alkali soils of that State. The experiment was unsuccessful, except with the pear.

Every variety of pear grew with a luxuriance unknown elsewhere, while apples, plums, peaches, etc., dwindled away, and perished in a couple of years.

We are in response to several inquiries, that the legislature of last winter did not cut off the State stipends to County Agricultural Societies and the expenses of the members of the Board of Agriculture.

It forbids the printing of any agricultural matter at the expense of the State and, in view of this fact, reduces the salary of the Secretary of the Board from one thousand to one hundred dollars.

A grade cow, belonging to John D. Rue of Mercer County, N. J., has raised nine calves within 36 months, having had twins three times, and now has triplets, dropped in December last. Her first pair of twins were dropped January, 1878.

The argument that more or less of sand which is composed of silica is found in every soil, it is answered that this form of silica is entirely useless to vegetation because it is unavailable.

All clay lands have a lack of silica, and it is claimed that this deficiency cannot be made up by the application of sand. Some of the purposes in the economy of nature which silica is said to subserve, is its capacity for absorbing moisture and ammonia from the atmosphere, its effect upon the stalks of plants to harden the epidermis, thereby strengthening them and rendering them less liable to attacks of rust, and in the case of wheat and other grain, to enable the plants to stand up and mature their grain, and not fall or lodge down which is the case when there is a lack of that substance.

These arguments are mostly put forth in support of a fertilizer which is claimed was discovered by the Poppin Brothers, chemists in Baltimore, and is called the Poppin Silicated Phosphate. Among the premiums offered through the Maine State Agricultural Society which may be found in our premium list, are several by the company which own the right to manufacture this fertilizer, and it will be noticed that it is stipulated that no other fertilizer is to be used in the production of the premium crops. For this purpose a certain quantity

had an opportunity to see, the blos-

sum will be larger than is some previous years, and we may hope to harvest nearly enough for home consumption.

Marin W. Penley, who has been in business and is going to try his hand at farming.

He has purchased a farm in Dover, Me., and moved there with his family last week.

On his way he called, here and subscribed for the MAINE FARMER, an important

newspaper, and one which augurs well for success in his new business.

This fertilizer, while it has been tested to some extent in some of the middle and southern States, and it is claimed with satisfactory results, is new here. As stated before we do not advise its adoption to the exclusion of other fertilizers, nor endorse its claimed superiority over them, but it will do no harm to try it on a small scale, especially on clayey soils where silica is more especially needed, and let it stand or fall according as the fair test shall be successful or a failure. We have procured a two hundred pound bag which we propose to experiment with, and test with other popular commercial fertilizers, and will give our readers the results in the fall. There is surely one advantage which the article possesses over others, which will not fall to command its price to the purchaser, and that is it is entirely odorless. We hope the time may soon come when these vexing fertilizer questions shall be satisfactorily settled, and the sharp competition among manufacturers and dealers, while it serves to confuse the farmer, may serve to aid in bringing about the desired result; but when there are such broad differences of opinion expressed as to the results of different fertilizers, not only by interested parties, but by scientists and experimenters, it is no wonder that some lose confidence in the whole theory of chemical fertilization.

Colby University.

Instead of our usual agricultural cut, we present our readers in this issue, with a fine view of Colby University, located at Waterville, in this State. Colby is among the oldest and best of the higher institutions of learning in our State and we are sure that those of our readers who have never visited it, will be glad of an opportunity of seeing its substantial buildings and beautiful grounds represented upon paper. Like most of our older educational institutions, it began at first in a small way, and has gradually worked itself up, until it now ranks among the best.

It was started near the beginning of the present century as a denominational school under the auspices of the Baptists. It was established as Waterville College by a charter granted, we think by the first Maine Legislature, and in 1867, having been liberally endowed by Gardner Colby, Esq., a wealthy merchant of Boston, the name was changed by authority of the Legislature, to Colby University. Mr. Colby has recently deceased and in his will has bequeathed an additional \$120,000 to the College which places its financial affairs in a very satisfactory condition.

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